

Michigan Department of Community Health
Quick Reference Document to Swine Influenza Investigations
April 27, 2009

All inquiries regarding suspect swine influenza cases, laboratory testing or general questions should be first directed to your local health department. Local health departments will contact MDCH to coordinate case follow-up and specimen approval for testing at the MDCH laboratory.

1) Case Definitions

Evaluations of ill person with flu-like symptoms should be guided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) case definition (see below). Evaluation should assess for clinically compatible signs and symptoms as well as applicable travel history to affected regions.

The most current case definitions from CDC can be found online at http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/casedef_swineflu.htm. These case definitions are very fluid and may change as additional information is obtained.

If the patient meets the case definition for swine influenza, MDCH recommends that laboratory testing be performed.

2) Laboratory Testing

Patients meeting the case definition could first have a rapid influenza test performed, if the medical facility can perform this test. A nasopharyngeal (NP) swab is the preferred specimen to collect for rapid influenza tests. NOTE: A second NP swab should also be collected at the same time for further testing at the MDCH laboratory, should the rapid test be positive for influenza A.

Additional information on collecting NP swabs is available online at http://www.michigan.gov/documents/DCH-0772_7497_7.pdf.

If a rapid influenza test cannot be performed, then one NP swab should be obtained for direct submission to the MDCH laboratory. NP specimens should be placed in viral transport media and refrigerated until ready to ship. Specimens should be shipped on cold packs using overnight delivery with a completed MDCH test requisition form (available online at http://www.michigan.gov/documents/DCH-0583TEST_REQUEST_7587_7.pdf). Suspect swine influenza specimens should NOT be set up for viral culture.

Specimen submission to MDCH requires pre-notification to the MDCH Bureau of Epidemiology at (517) 335-8165 or after hours at (517) 335-9030.

The MDCH laboratory is running PCR confirmatory tests daily. Specimens received by 9am will be tested the same day with results after 4pm the same day. Specimens received after 9am will be held until the following morning.

Limited supplies of NP swabs and viral transport media may be available starting April 28th from your Regional Epidemiologist or Immunization Coordinator. *Due to limited supplies, requests for viral test kits will need to be approved by the MDCH Bureau of Epidemiology at the same time cases are approved for testing.* Alternatively, physicians and laboratories should check locally with other medical facilities and laboratories for testing supplies.

Infection Control

Per CDC guidelines (available at <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/guidance/>), patients with suspect or confirmed illness should be placed in a single-patient room with the door closed. If available, an airborne isolation room with negative pressure can be used. A negative pressure room should be used for high-risk procedures (e.g. suctioning, bronchoscopy, etc).

The ill person should wear a surgical mask when outside of the room. Medical staff should follow droplet and contact precautions, including wearing gloves, gowns and eye protection when collecting respiratory specimens. CDC's interim recommendations for masks and respirators states that "pending clarification of transmission patterns for this virus, personnel providing direct patient care for suspected or confirmed swine influenza cases should wear a fit-tested disposable N95 respirator when entering the patient room." In addition, personnel engaged in aerosol-generating activities (e.g., collection of clinical specimens, endotracheal intubation, nebulizer treatment, bronchoscopy and resuscitation efforts) should wear a fit-tested disposable N95 respirator.

Ill persons should be counseled to avoid contact with other for 7 days or until symptoms have resolved.